

Shoddy Performance

The performance of Indian nuclear reactors has been shoddy to put it mildly. It is the worst amongst all the countries with large power programmes. RAPS-1, the oldest Indian reactor of the CANDU design, has been out of order more than two thirds of the time since 1973. Narora-1, a new reactor which became operational only in 1989 has barely produced at a quarter of its capacity.

Unjust !

Those who bear the most harm caused by nuclear operations get none of the so-called benefits. A look at the miserable, still 'powerless' condition of the people around Rawatbhata, after two decades of nuclear development, would convince anybody of its false promise. Being extremely capital intensive, it produces very few 'local' jobs except the dirty and dangerous unskilled jobs.

Irrelevant to Our Real Needs

The real energy crisis facing the country is the great scarcity of fuel wood for cooking. This is related to disappearing forests, the decline in soil fertility and a myriad of other serious environmental problems. Nuclear power does not address itself to such problems at all. Instead, by draining huge amounts of material and human resources from more sensible and relevant alternatives, it in fact, adds to the crisis.

Nuclear Power Breeds Nucleocracy

Due to the unique combination of deadly dangers posed by nuclear power, it gives rise to an extraordinarily coercive state apparatus, which is positively detrimental to civil liberties. Fundamental rights, such as the right to life of yet unborn generations are trampled upon with impunity. The whole enterprise is carried out under a thick veil of secrecy and lies that is harmful to a healthy

polity. The Atomic Energy Act of 1962, is a blot on our constitution.

What You Can Do

Become better informed and educate yourself on nuclear issues. *Anumukti* (see contact address below) is a bimonthly publication devoted to the ideal of a non-nuclear India.

Hold educational events in your community to raise awareness. Bring in speakers, films, books, journals, poster exhibitions, etc.

Contact existing organisations concerned with nuclear issues. Write to the contact address given below and we would put you in touch with an organisation in your area.

Write letters to editors, especially in response to pro-nuclear articles. Write to elected representatives. Demand information. Be direct, factual and brief to be effective.

Work with existing organisations (unions, women's organisations, student groups, ...) in your community to promote awareness of the nuclear issues. Encourage them to participate in existing antinuclear campaigns.

Form your own group. Commemorate events like the Hiroshima Day (August 6) and Chernobyl Day (April 26). We will gladly help.

Give money, especially to young groups.

Contact

Anumukti
Sampoorna Kranti Vidyalaya
Vedehhi via Valed,
District: Surat, Gujarat INDIA 394641

Sampoorna Kranti Vidyalaya conducts periodic short term courses on energy and environment and nonviolent protest issues. The vidyalaya library has an extensive collection of nuclear and antinuclear literature and journals. We can also help in setting up contact with other antinuclear individuals and organisations in your area.

The Case For A Nuclear-Free INDIA



Say **NO** To
Nuclear Power

Nuclear Power is Dangerous

The very process of nuclear power generation produces vast quantities of the most poisonous and explosive substances known to humanity. A tennis ball size quantity of plutonium can destroy a city the size of Bombay. A nuclear power plant produces hundreds of kilograms of plutonium every year and is therefore a prime target for enemy attack and terrorist groups.

Hiroshima, Pacific Islands, Kyshtym, Windscale, Three Mile Island, Chernobyl.... the role-call of nuclear disasters goes on and on. For every serious accident, there are scores of near misses. Even in India mishaps and accidents—"unusual incidents" in nukespeak—have occurred with far greater frequency than the reassuring predictions of experts.

Contrary to the oft-stated claims of Indian nucleocrats, a recent Greenpeace study indicates that CANDU reactors (the mainstay of the Indian nuclear programme) are **inherently unsafe**—a disaster waiting in the wings.

The insurance industry is not prepared to back up the nucleocrat's claim that nuclear power plants are safe. Read your insurance policy; your property is not covered in case of radioactive contamination!

Dead as Dodo in Most Places

No new nuclear power plant has been sold anywhere in North America for more than ten years. Many European countries, including Sweden, Austria, and Italy have by referendum decided to phase out nuclear power. When the Thatcher government privatized the British nuclear industry in 1989, nobody wanted the nuclear power plants. Many countries have voluntarily opted for non-nuclear policies. The only countries still rooting for nuclear power are those where bureaucrats rule the roost and have plenty of public funds to waste.

Everlastingly Dirty

Not only reactor operation, but all the various stages of the nuclear fuel cycle, cause radioactive pollution. Uranium mining and processing is a special threat to the health and the culture of tribal workers. The wastes, called mill tailings will continue to produce deadly radon gas and hence spread radioactive fallout for hundreds of thousands of years. Spills and leachings from mine sites contaminate river systems. Dust from dried tailings ponds gets spread about by winds and has made life in the summer months a particular agony to the Santhal tribals of Jaduguda in Bihar.

Nuclear Power has been given a fair trial and its promise falls far short of even the most modest hopes, while the threats it poses are too horrendous to contemplate.

The hundreds of radioactive waste products produced in reactors remain extraordinarily dangerous for thousands of years. Nobody knows any method of safely storing these poisons which are toxic in extremely minute quantities for their entire lifetimes.

Too Costly to Continue

Despite decades of government funded development and many billions in subsidies, the nuclear industry still cannot stand on its own feet. Its estimate of the cost of electricity produced are a tissue of lies. They do not include the costs of waste storage and greatly underestimate the costs required for the dismantling of aged radioactive shells of defunct reactors. Even the costs they do include bear no relation to reality. For instance, heavy water costs which easily run into more than 100 crores per year, are shown to be much less, through accounting jugglery by maintaining the fiction that the heavy water is not bought but 'leased'.

Hazards are understated

Radiation has been proved to be far more deadly than previous estimates of 'experts'. 'Acceptable limits' have repeatedly been found to be unacceptable in the light of further evidence. Every dose is an overdose.

Even without accidents, regular releases of radioactivity from nuclear power plants kill people living in their neighbourhood. There have been reports of significant increases in infant mortality, abortions, congenital deformities and the general level of ill-health in both humans as well as animals in the vicinity of nuclear plants. A survey of five villages near the Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant at Rawatbhata provides striking confirmation of this. A large number of children with birth defects have been born in these villages after the reactor has started operation.

Leukaemia rates in children have been found to be many times higher than the national averages near nuclear installations in U.K., Canada and Germany. The nuclear authorities, have no 'satisfactory explanation' for these repeatedly confirmed findings.

A study conducted by the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada recently confirmed that incidence of Downs' Syndrome (a genetically linked mental retardation) was 83% higher than the state average in the county surrounding the CANDU station at Pickering.

A Miniscule Contribution

During a typical month the total electricity production in the country today is around 21,000 GW-h. Of this, the contribution of nuclear generated electricity is a mere 400 GW-h. Since around 7,000 GW-h is lost during distribution, the miniscule nuclear contribution can easily be made up by slightly better grid maintainance and other much cheaper conservation measures.